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The relations of some of the branches of federal activity to the public health are very direct and obvious. Some of the investigations of the Hygienic Laboratory of the Public Health and Marine Hospital Service, for example, resulting in the tracing of typhoid fever to contaminated milk, are evidently made for the immediate protection of the public. The work of the Meat Inspection Division in preventing the sale of the meat of diseased animals is just as immediate in its purpose. It is evident that a plentiful supply of wholesome food is as essential to the health of a people as any other measure for the prevention or eradication of disease. Well-nourished bodies may resist disease where impoverished ones succumb.

But the bearings of other branches of federal activity upon the public health may not be so obvious to the superficial or casual observer. To such an observer the study of the proper construction and ventilation of a barn may not be as close to the public health as the study of the properties of an antitoxic serum. But in these days of preventive medicine we are willing not alone to be cured of disease, but even to prevent it in almost any way whatsoever—for example, by using only clean milk, from clean, healthy cows, and which obviously can only be kept clean and healthy in barns of sanitary construction and ventilation. The enemy (the pathogenic microorganism in this case) will enter through any gate. All of them must be closed.

The figures quoted above have been taken from Document No. 1,031, House of Representatives (Treasury Department Document No. 2,516), Estimates of Appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1910; also, Treasury Department Document No. 2,533, Statements of Balances, Appropriations and Disbursements of the Government for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1908. Both of these publications are easily obtainable by those interested, at the Library of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

W. N. BERG

WASHINGTON, D. C.

#### A DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

SENATOR OWEN has introduced in the senate a bill establishing a Department of Public Health, which has been read twice and referred to the Committee on Public Health and National Quarantine. The principle of this bill has been approved by the committee of one hundred of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and members of the Association are urged to make efforts to secure the passage of the bill, more especially by writing letters to members of congress endorsing the *principle* of the bill and in favor of a wide extension of the present health work of the national government.

President Taft, in his public addresses, as in his first annual message to congress, both the great political parties in their platforms, the National Grange, the American Federation of Labor, the American Medical Association, the Committee of One Hundred, and others, have put themselves on record as in favor of a broad reform of the existing situation. It is important to impress upon congress that there is a thoughtful and widespread demand in this country for comprehensive reform at this time.

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#### THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

THE summer meeting of the American Chemical Society, to be held in San Francisco, July 12–15, 1910, promises to be one of the pleasantest outings ever enjoyed by the members of the society.

A special train made up of the Santa Fe's finest equipment will leave Chicago on the evening of July 4, arriving at Colorado Springs on the morning of July 6. About six hours will be allowed for a trip to Manitou, the Garden of the Gods or to the top of Pikes Peak. Leaving about one o'clock the train will reach Adamana on July 7 and a half day will be spent in a visit to the Petrified Forests, two of which and possibly three may be examined. Leaving Adamana that night the party will arrive at the Grand Canyon of the Colorado on the morning of July 8 where the day will be spent. Leaving the Grand Canyon that evening the train will arrive at Redlands

and Riverside, California, the following afternoon and about two hours and a half will be given to the semi-tropical scenery of each of these two cities. Sunday, July 10, will be spent at Los Angeles, leaving there in the evening and arriving at Lang, Cal., on the following morning. At Lang the borax mines will be visited on invitation of Mr. S. T. Mather, of the Thorkildsen-Mather Company, where the party will be their guests until about 1:30 o'clock, when the train will leave for Santa Barbara, giving us about five hours in that unequalled seaside resort. During the night the train will leave for San Francisco via the coast route of the Southern Pacific, probably reaching our destination about twelve o'clock on July 12.

The meeting will follow and our entertainment by the California Section. The tentative program for our entertainment includes: first, a steamer trip around the Bay and out through the Golden Gate; second, a trip to the top of Mt. Tamalpais and to the Muir Woods, the first giving us an extensive view of the ocean, the bay and the surrounding mountains and hills, while the second contains fine specimens of the coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*); third, an excursion on the Ocean Shore Railway to Pescadero with a possible return via the Santa Clara Valley; fourth, an excursion to the vineyards and wineries of the Italian-Swiss colonies in Sonoma County; fifth, a visit to the University of California at Berkeley; sixth, a visit to Stanford University with a possible automobile trip through the orchards of the Santa Clara Valley; seventh, a camping out trip for one night and parts of two days into the Big Basin, the State Park, where some of the biggest redwoods are to be seen; also it is hoped to visit some of the local manufacturing plants.

Following the meeting the party will dissolve as a whole, returning as they desire, either via the smelters in Utah and Colorado, via the beautiful scenery of the Canadian Pacific, or via the National Yellowstone Park.

Unusually low rates have been obtained from Chicago; namely, \$62.50 for the round trip from that city with \$15 extra if the party returns via the northern routes. There will

be \$6.50 extra railway fare on the side trip to the Grand Canyon. The berth rate from Chicago to San Francisco will be \$14 with an additional charge for the four extra days in transit in lieu of hotel expenses, as the Pullmans will be used throughout the trip. This additional charge will approximate \$7 on the berth rate.

The Puget Sound Section are hoping that a considerable number of the members may decide to return via Seattle and if a party can be formed they will make every effort to show us their own delightful surroundings.

In view of the efforts that are being made by the California members and of the unusual attractions of the trip, it is hoped that a special effort will be made by eastern members to be present at the meeting. Reservations for the special train will be made in the order of their receipt. Any members of allied societies going west at this time who may wish to share in the privileges of the special train should address the secretary, Charles L. Parsons, New Hampshire College, Durham, N. H.

#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

BEFORE the Paris Academy of Sciences on March 4, M. Picard made a eulogy on the late Alexander Agassiz. Mr. Agassiz had attended a meeting of the academy two weeks previously.

THE will of Alexander Agassiz, dated September 17, 1906, was filed at Newport, on April 14. He bequeathed \$200,000 to Harvard University, half for the Museum of Comparative Zoology and half for its publications. The university also receives scientific apparatus and books, and will ultimately receive the further sum of \$12,000. Mr. Agassiz further bequeathed \$50,000 to the National Academy of Sciences and an equal sum to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. \$25,000 is left to the Newport School of Manual Training, to which ultimately \$6,000 will be added. Mr. Agassiz's will further provides that in the case of the death of any one of his three sons without issue his share of the estate shall ultimately go to Harvard University for the Museum of Comparative Zoology.